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10. (Amended) A schedule management system, comprising:

a schedule server which stores schedules of participants and schedules of equipments reserved by ones of said participants in different groups; and  
a plurality of remote client devices operatively connected to said schedule server, which allow client users to input schedules of said participants and request an idle time retrieval from said schedule server, wherein a degree of significance is provided to said participants respectively so that schedules of said participants are grouped in the order of said degree of significance to thereby produce the idle time corresponding to said degree of significance.

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11. (Amended) A schedule management system, comprising:

a schedule server which stores schedules of participants and schedules of equipments reserved by ones of said participants in different groups; and  
a plurality of remote client devices operatively connected to said schedule server, which allow client users to input schedules of said participants and request an idle time retrieval from said schedule server, wherein said schedule server comprises databases which store schedules of participants and schedules of equipments reserved by ones of said participants, and a multistageous idle time retrieval unit which divides schedules registered for participants and equipments into a plurality of groups and retrieves an idle time common from one group as a retrieval condition for retrieving an idle time common for another group of said plurality of groups.

1           **--15.** The schedule management system according to claim 10, wherein said  
2           schedule server comprises a communication controller which provides registration for a  
3           special group, and wherein said idle time is retrieved so that at least one of participants and  
4           equipments in said special group satisfies a retrieval condition for retrieving said idle time.

1           **16.** The schedule management system according to claim 15, wherein said  
2           schedule server further comprises a data access unit which accesses selected databases in  
3           accordance with instructions for retrieving the idle time common from said plurality of  
4           groups.

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1           **17.** The schedule management system according to claim 10, wherein said  
2           schedule server comprises a data access unit which accesses selected databases in accordance  
3           with instructions for retrieving the idle time common from said plurality of groups.

1           **18.** The schedule management system according to claim 11, wherein said  
2           schedule server further comprises a communication controller which provides registration for  
3           a special group, and wherein said idle time is retrieved so that at least one of participants and  
4           equipments in said special group satisfies a retrieval condition for retrieving said idle time.

1           **19.** The schedule management system according to claim 18, wherein said  
2           schedule server further comprises a data access unit which accesses selected databases in  
3           accordance with instructions for retrieving the idle time common from said plurality of